



# TEXAS

## Health and Human Services

**Dr. Courtney N. Phillips, Executive Commissioner**

### **Request for Applications (RFA)**

**For**

**Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program  
RFA No. HHS0003297**

**Date of Release: February 5, 2019**

**Responses Due: March 19, 2019 by 2 p.m. Central Time**

**Addendum #1 issued February 11, 2019**

#### **NIGP Class/Item Codes:**

- 952-05 - Alcohol and Drug Detoxification, Including Rehabilitation);**
- 952-15 - Case Management;**
- 952-17 - Child Abuse: Identification, Treatment, and Prevention, Including Sexual Abuse;**
- 952-18 - Child Care Services, Including Food Programs;**
- 952-21 - Counseling Services;**
- 952-43 - Family and Social Services, Including Shopping and Buying Services;**
- 952-67 - Parenting Intervention Services;**
- 952-74 - Referral Services;**
- 952-85 - Support Services;**
- 961-46 - Interpreter Services, Foreign Language, Hearing Impaired, etc.;**
- 961-67 - Sign Language Services for the Hearing Impaired;**
- 961-75 - Translation Services, All Languages; and**
- 961-87 - Volunteer Services**

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## **ARTICLE I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, DEFINITIONS, AND AUTHORITY**

### **1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The State of Texas, by and through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), seeks to implement the Texas Veterans + Family Alliance (TV+FA) grant program (Program), as directed by Senate Bill 55, 84<sup>th</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, 2015. Through the Program, HHSC awards grant funds, to be matched on at least a dollar for dollar basis, to local Texas communities to address mental health needs of veterans and their families in accordance with the specifications contained in this Request for Applications (RFA).

To be considered for award, Respondents must execute **Exhibit A, Affirmations and Acceptance, v1.3, Exhibit D, Exceptions and Assumption Form, if applicable, Exhibit F, Federal Assurance-Non Construction, and Exhibit G, Federal Lobbying Certification** of this RFA and provide all other required information and documentation as set forth in this RFA. If awarded a Contract, Respondent shall be subject to every provision of the Uniform Terms and Conditions - Grant, v.2.15, attached hereto as Exhibit B and HHSC Special Conditions, attached hereto as Exhibit D.

### **1.2 DEFINITIONS**

Refer to **Exhibit B, HHS Uniform Terms and Conditions – Grant, v.2.16** for additional definitions. Additionally, as used in this RFA, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following terms and conditions have the meanings assigned below:

"Addendum" means a written clarification or revision to this RFA issued by the System Agency.

"Apparent Awardee" - an organization that has been selected to receive a grant award through response to this RFA but has not yet executed a grant agreement or contract. May also be referred to as "Apparent Grant Recipient" or "Apparent Grantee."

"Applicant" - the entity responding to this RFA on behalf of the Community Collaborative. The Applicant is the organization with which HHSC contracts, to which HHSC disburses grant funds, and that will handle any funds to be distributed to Partner Organizations. May also be referred to as "Lead Applicant" or "Respondent".

“Application” - documents the Applicant completes and provides in response to this RFA including all required forms and exhibits. May also be referred to as “Proposal”, “Grant Proposal”, “Application Package” or “Response”.

“Budget” - the financial plan for carrying out a Proposed Project. The Applicant provides a proposed budget, which includes both state-awarded funds and match, as part of a response to this RFA. May also be referred to as “Project Budget”.

“Client” - a member of the population to be served under the proposed Project as the Applicant describes in its response to this RFA. For the purposes of this Program, a client is a Texas veteran, member of the military, or a family member of a veteran military member. The Applicant may further define client eligibility in its response to this RFA.

“Community Collaborative” - an entity including but not limited to federal, state, and local governmental entities, nonprofit community organizations, and faith-based community organizations which bring public and private sectors together to coordinate and provide mental health services and essential mental health support services to Clients. The Community Collaborative may be made up of member organizations that are not directly involved in providing services and supports as part of the Proposed Project. See also “Lead Applicant” and “Partner Organizations.”

“Cost Reimbursement” - under the cost reimbursement method of funding, a Grantee must initially pay for project activities with their own funds. HHSC then issues reimbursement payments to the Grantee on a monthly basis for reported actual cash disbursements as substantiated by expenditure and match documentation.

“Direct Cost” - a cost that can be identified specifically with a cost objective within a grant Project budget. A direct cost generally falls under a budget category such as salaries/wages, fringe benefits or contracted services.

“Expenditure and Match Report” - a required monthly report that includes: expenses the Grantee incurred and paid for during a reporting period, to be reimbursed from state funds and matching funds expended during that reporting period; and any information as requested by the System Agency.

“Texas eGrants” - the electronic marketplace where State of Texas grant contract opportunities may be located. The Texas eGrants may be accessed at <https://txapps.texas.gov/tolapp/egrants/search.htm>.

“Grant” - a financial award provided to a Successful Applicant as a result of providing a response to a RFA. May also be referred to as “Award” or “Grant Award”.

“Grantee” - may also be referred to as “Grant Recipient”. A Grantee is a Successful Applicant for whom a contract has been fully executed as a result of response to this RFA and award.

“Grant Program” or “Program”- A program administered internally by an organization that provides grant awards. TV+FA is a grant program. Grant Programs are different from grant projects (see “Project” definition.)

“Health and Human Services Commission” or “HHSC” - means the administrative agency established under Chapter 531, Texas Government Code or its designee.

“Health and Human Services (HHS) Grant Website” - the electronic marketplace where HHSC grant contract opportunities are located. The HHS website may be accessed at <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/pcs/rfa.cfm>

“Indirect Cost” - a business expense that is not readily identified with a Project activity but is necessary for an organization’s general operations and activities.

“Internal Controls” - the mechanisms, rules and procedures implemented by a company to ensure the integrity of financial and accounting information, promote accountability and prevent fraud.

“Key Personnel” - an Applicant's Project Lead, Project Contact, Fiscal Contact, Executive Director, and/or any other key stakeholders who will perform key Project activities.

“Lead Applicant” - the legal entity responsible for submitting the application on behalf of the Community Collaborative. If the Lead Applicant is awarded a grant contract, the Lead applicant is the party responsible for execution of contractual requirements.

“Match” - share of costs the Applicant and/or Partners must contribute to accomplish the purposes of the grant program and Proposed Project. Cash match includes funds contributed by the Applicant, contributed by Partner Organizations, or donations from third parties. In-kind match includes the value of personnel, volunteer time, goods, services, direct costs, and indirect costs which are valued per Uniform Grant Guidance, 2 CFR 200. All match, both cash and in-kind, can only come from non-federal and non-State sources.

“Partner Organization” - a member of a Community Collaborative that helps implement the Proposed Project and is not the Applicant. Also referred to as “Partner.”

“Project” - work and activities the Applicant describes as part of the response to this RFA and for which Grant funds are awarded. A Project has a clearly-defined scope of work, beginning, and end. A Project may also be referred to as “Grant Project”, “Grant-Funded Project” or “Grant-Supported Project”. During the application period and before Apparent Awardees are identified, a Project may also be referred to as a “Proposed Project.”

“RFA” means this Request for Applications, including Exhibits and Addenda, if any.

“Proposed Project” - a proposed project (or project proposal) provides all the information required for project stakeholders to decide to initiate a project. It is essentially a rigorously defined project pitch that may contain the following: problem statement, business case, assumptions, constraints, alternatives, estimates, and project risks.

“State” - means the State of Texas and its instrumentalities, including HHSC, the System Agency and any other state agency, its officers, employees, or authorized agents.

“Successful Applicant” - an organization selected to receive a grant award as a result of responding to this RFA. May also be referred to as "Awarded Applicant."

"System Agency" means the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, its officers, employees or authorized agents.

### **1.3 AUTHORITY**

The System Agency is requesting applications under Chapter 531 of the Texas Government Code, Section 0992.

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## **ARTICLE II. SCOPE OF GRANT AWARD**

### **2.1 PROGRAM BACKGROUND**

#### **2.1.1 Purpose**

Senate Bill 55, 84<sup>th</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, ("S.B. 55") directed HHSC to establish a grant program to support community mental health programs providing and coordinating mental health services and treatment for Texas veterans and their families.

- A. The Texas Veterans + Family Alliance (TV+FA) Grant Program seeks to improve the quality of life of Texas veterans and their family members by supporting local communities across the state to:
  - 1. expand availability of;
  - 2. increase access to; and
  - 3. enhance delivery of mental health treatment and services.
- B. Grant awards are made to Community Collaborative to:
  - 1. implement new or improved systems that coordinate and deliver mental health services;
  - 2. provide supportive services essential to provision of mental health services; and
  - 3. develop and/or support the Community Collaborative with the goal of self-sustainment by the end of the grant project period.
- C. Projects support a range of clinical mental health and non-clinical supportive services for veterans and family members including but not limited to:
  - 1. Evidence-based therapies and treatments;
  - 2. Individual, group, and family/couples peer support services;
  - 3. Individual and family counseling;
  - 4. Suicide prevention initiatives to help community members, veterans, and their family members develop awareness and skills in recognizing, assisting, and referring to mental health services;
  - 5. Supportive services essential to the provision of mental health services such as child care, emergency financial support, transportation, and housing assistance; and
  - 6. Navigation services such as case management and referral services.

The Program seeks to empower local communities to identify and address mental health needs of veterans and family members. Program funds are intended to be a catalyst for communities to develop and support sustainable partnerships, collaborative relationships, and coordinated service delivery systems that continue to operate after the life of the grant project period.



Communities are required to match awarded state funds on at least a dollar for dollar basis. Match can be in the form of cash and/or in-kind goods and services. Match shows the community's commitment to address mental health needs of veterans and family members such as posttraumatic stress, depression, and other conditions.

A Grantee must ensure clients served through the Project are eligible to receive services **before** the Grantee requests reimbursement for those services. Grantees must maintain documented verification of client eligibility.

### 2.1.2 Behavioral Health Strategic Plan

The Program aligns with the mission, vision, and goals of the [Fiscal Years 2017-21 Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan \(Plan\)](#), published by the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (SBHCC) and required by 2016-17 General Appropriations Act, H.B. 1, 84<sup>th</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, 2015 (Article IX, Section 10.04).

**Vision:** to ensure that Texas has a unified approach to the delivery of behavioral health services that allows all Texans to have access to care at the right time and place.

**Mission:** to develop a coordinated statewide approach to providing appropriate and cost-effective behavioral health services to Texans.

The Plan notes: *“untreated behavioral health needs can affect all aspects of life including economic productivity, student success, criminal justice, and public health and safety.”* It identifies “Veteran and Military Service Member Supports” as a gap to be addressed within the larger approach to providing behavioral health services statewide.

The Program, through grant-supported projects, seeks to fulfill these Strategic Plan goals and objectives:

#### A. Goal 1 - Program and Service Coordination

1. Address service needs of high risk individuals and families by promoting community collaboration;
2. Identify and address duplication of effort across state agencies and community-level organizations; and
3. Implement improved program, service coordination, and integrated program and service strategies to reduce duplication of effort and maximize resources.

#### B. Goal 2 - Program and Service Delivery

1. Identify and coordinate (provision of) best, promising, and evidence-based behavioral health practices;

2. Identify strategies to improve and strengthen access to behavioral health programs and services to engage and serve individuals in remote areas;
3. Implement strategies to improve service access and continuity of care; and
4. Develop and implement programs and services to address identified gaps for diverse and special populations.

### **C. Goal 3 - Statewide Data Collaboration**

Identify existing common measures or similar metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services across targeted agencies (and community-level organizations).

#### **2.1.3 SBHCC Reporting Requirements**

Per the 2018-19 General Appropriations Action, S.B. 1, 85<sup>th</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, 2017 (Article IX, Section 10.04), Program Grantees must report, twice annually, to the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council on the impact each Community Collaborative has had on project implementation and mental health outcomes on population(s) served by the grant funding."

Reports will serve:

- A. as opportunities to increase collaboration for effective expenditure of behavioral health funds among state and local entities, and
- B. to emphasize a systemic approach to delivering behavioral health services by demonstrating relationships between state and local/community efforts.

## **2.2 GRANT AWARD AND TERM**

### **2.2.1 Available Funding**

HHSC anticipates approximately \$20 million in funds will be available to support multiple awardees in implementing Program grant-supported Projects, with a \$10 million annual allocation. Projects funded as a result of this RFA will be based on the degree to which they meet criteria described in **Article IV** of this RFA as recommended by the Selection Committee and approved by the HHSC Executive Commissioner.

Grant awards are funded:

- A. on a cost-reimbursement basis; and
- B. only to the extent the Grantee commits, uses and reports match on a dollar for dollar basis within the same Grant period.

Upon execution of a contract resulting from this RFA and award, Grantee may request disbursement of an initial payment not to exceed 25% of the state award to the Grantee in accordance with Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards.

### 2.2.2 Grant Period

The anticipated award period of grants resulting from this RFA is September 1, 2019 - August 31, 2021. This is a 24-month grant period.

The grant period is subject to change and is determined by HHSC for Successful Applicants through the negotiation process.

HHSC notifies each Successful Applicant of its selection to receive an award. Per **Section 4.5 Negotiation and Award** of this RFA, HHSC may enter into negotiations with Successful Applicants to determine award periods, final award amounts, and contract terms to execute contracts.

## 2.3 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

To be awarded a contract as a result of this RFA, an Applicant must be a nonprofit organization or a governmental entity representing a Community Collaborative as the Lead Applicant.

Eligible applicants must also comply with the criteria listed below:

1. If applicable, organizations submitting a request for application must agree that they are in compliance with Texas Health and Safety Code § 828.002, "Requirements for Adoption," and § 828.003, "Sterilization Agreement." (<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/HS/htm/HS.828.htm>)
2. Respondent must be established as an appropriate legal entity as described in the paragraph above, according to state statutes and must have the authority and be in good standing to do business in Texas and to conduct the activities described in the RFA.
3. Respondent must have a Texas business address. A post office box may be used when the application is submitted, but the respondent must conduct

business at a physical location in Texas prior to the date that the contract is awarded.

4. Respondent must be in good standing with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.
5. Respondent is not eligible to apply for funds under this RFA if currently debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded or ineligible for participation in Federal or State assistance programs.
6. In compliance with Comptroller of Public Accounts and Statewide Procurement Division rules, a name search will be conducted using the websites listed in this section prior to the development of a contract.

A respondent is not considered eligible to contract with HHSC, regardless of the funding source, if a name match is found on any of the following lists:

- a) The General Services Administration's (GSA) [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) for parties excluded from receiving federal contracts, certain subcontracts and from certain types of federal financial and non-financial assistance and benefits;
  - b) The [Office of Inspector General \(OIG\) List of Excluded Individuals/Entities Search](#);
  - c) [Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts \(CPA\) Debarment List](#);
  - d) [Iran, Sudan, & Foreign Terrorist Organizational Check and Boycott Israel](#), prior to award, the purchaser must check the divestment lists in accordance with the Texas Government Code; and
  - e) [Texas Comptroller Public Accounts \(CPA\) Franchise Tax Check](#).
7. Respondents must be listed if they are Professional Corporations, Professional Associations, Texas Corporations, and/or Texas Limited Partnership Companies. Secretary of State (SOS) at <https://direct.sos.state.tx.us/acct/acct-login.asp>.
  8. Contractor must have access to or maintain a computer, e-mail, and the internet throughout the contract period.

Respondent is not considered eligible to apply unless the respondent meets the eligibility conditions to the stated criteria listed above at the time the application is submitted. Respondent must continue to meet these conditions throughout the selection and funding process. HHSC expressly reserves the right to review and analyze the documentation submitted and to request additional documentation, and determine the respondent's eligibility to compete for the contract award.

## **2.4 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

The purpose of the Program is to support mental health programs providing services, treatment, and essential supportive services to veterans and their families.

With awarded funds, matching dollars, and matching in-kind goods and services, Grantees implement projects to provide and coordinate:

- A. New, enhanced, and/or expanded military-informed mental health services to veterans and their families, and
- B. Supportive services essential to the provision of mental health services as part of a continuum of care implemented by a developing or existing Community Collaborative to address mental health needs of the community's veterans and family members.
- C. Examples of these types of services include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Evidence-based therapies and treatment,
  - 2. Individual, group, family, and couples peer support services,
  - 3. Suicide prevention initiatives to help community members, veterans, and their family members develop awareness and skills in recognizing, assisting, and referring to mental health services,
  - 4. Treatment of substance and alcohol use disorders (SUDs/AUDs),
  - 5. Individual and family counseling, and
  - 6. Navigation services such as case management and referrals.
- D. Funds may also support activities essential to the provision of mental health services including, but not limited to:
  - 1. Family-related services including child care,
  - 2. Emergency financial support,
  - 3. Transportation,
  - 4. Housing,
  - 5. Limited infrastructure costs such as telemedicine equipment, and
  - 6. Necessary training for providers and staff which directly benefits veterans and family members served during the grant period.
- E. Developing, sustaining, and delivering mental health and supportive services requires the combined effort of the whole community rather than the exclusive effort of any single organization or level of government.

As such, Program funds may also **support establishing, supporting, and strengthening Community Collaborative** to develop and implement projects to provide **new, enhanced, and/or expanded, military-informed mental health services** by identifying opportunities to **improve service delivery systems, coordinate and maximize the use of existing resources**, and **enhance continuity of care** for veterans and their families.

These types of activities include, but are not limited to:

1. Needs assessments of veterans and their families for communities that have mental health as a focus,
2. Administrative support for Community Collaborative oversight and operational activities related to implementing the Proposed Project,
3. Support for community leadership teams focusing on mental health needs of veterans and their families,
4. Community Collaborative activities identifying gaps in mental health services for veterans and their families and a plan to address those gaps collaboratively, and
5. Other costs related to developing and supporting **sustainable partnerships, collaborative relationships, and coordinated service delivery systems** that **continue to operate after the life of the Proposed Project**.

#### **2.4.1 Community Collaborative**

To ensure effective and appropriate mental health care for veterans and their families, it is critically important for community providers to develop and sustain partnerships to reach veterans and family members regardless of treatment settings.

Community Collaborative are encouraged to include representatives from local U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) offices, the local mental health authority (LMHA), the local Military Veteran Peer Network (MVPN) Peer Service Coordinator, Veterans County Service Officers (VCSOs), Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), and other nonprofit, faith-based, and for-profit organizations to:

- **Coordinate and maximize use of existing resources,**
- **Identify opportunities to improve and expand mental health service delivery systems,**
- **Enhance mental health continuity of care** for veterans and their families, and
- Develop and support **sustainable partnerships, Community Collaborative relationships, and coordinated service delivery systems** that **continue to operate after the Program Grant period has ended**.

A Community Collaborative must be able to:

1. Plan by:
  - a. Cooperatively identifying unmet mental health service needs and support services essential to addressing needs of veterans and families in the community,
  - b. Collaboratively developing a Project to address those needs, and
  - c. Including veterans and family members in Project planning and implementation.
2. Coordinate by:
  - a. Identifying areas for improvements in mental health service delivery systems (including federal, state, local, nonprofit, for profit, and faith-based systems) and where coordination and collaboration is possible,
  - b. Collaboratively developing a Project to address those improvements,
  - c. Seeking to reduce duplication of effort and maximize available resources, and
  - d. Enhancing continuity of care for veterans and their families receiving mental health services.
3. Invest by:
  - a. Committing to help implement a Project to address unmet mental health needs of a community's veterans and family members,
  - b. Matching state funds awarded on at least a dollar-for-dollar basis, and
  - c. Planning to sustain relationships, partnerships, and program services after the Project ends.

**In addition to** determining unique unmet needs of veterans and families in their service areas, Community Collaborative are encouraged to review unmet needs, gaps and goals identified in these documents, as well as other sources of information:

- [Texas Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan, 2016](#)
- [Texas Mental Health Program for Veterans, 2017](#)
- [Hogg Foundation: Understanding Mental Health Systems and Service in Texas](#)
- [Bridging Gaps in Mental Health Care: Lessons Learned from the Welcome Back Veterans Initiative, 2017](#)
- [Disabled American Veterans - Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home](#)
- [VA - Transforming Veterans' Experiences During Military-to-Civilian Transition: Gaps and Opportunities](#)
- [An Assessment of Mental Health Services for Veterans in Texas, 2015](#)

- [Identifying the Unmet Needs of Texas Veterans and Their Families: A Statewide Needs Assessment, 2016](#)
- [VA: National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics Reports FY16](#)
- [Supporting US Veterans: A Review of Veteran-Focused Needs Assessments from 2008-2017](#)

## 2.4.2 Services

The primary focus of the Projects involves providing mental health services to veterans and their families. Projects may also provide essential support services that address barriers that often prevent veterans and their families from accessing and/or participating in mental health programs.

Essential support services may include:

- Emergency financial assistance;
- Rental and housing assistance;
- Utility assistance;
- Transportation;
- Employment services;
- Child care assistance; and,
- Navigation and case management services.

Ensuring veterans and their families are able to access and participate in mental health services through provision of essential support services is integral to grant program success.

The Applicant's response should clearly show mental health services and essential support services are Proposed Project primary areas of focus.

### **Project services must seek to:**

- A. Improve existing mental health services or support services essential to mental health service provision, by:
  1. Incorporating evidence-based, best, and/or promising practices and expertise of mental health professionals,
  2. Ensuring services are provided with military cultural competence and are culturally and linguistically sensitive, and
  3. Including provision of family and support services as part of mental health recovery plans.
- B. Increase availability of mental health services or support services essential to mental health service provision, by:
  1. Expanding the number and types of services available,
  2. Increasing the number of professionals providing services, and
  3. Expanding eligible client bases to include family members.



- C. Increase and improve access to mental health services or support services essential to mental health service provision, by:
1. Increasing awareness of services,
  2. Assisting with navigating multiple service and benefits systems,
  3. Coordinating clinical and support services for veterans and family members, and
  4. Addressing transportation and other barriers to accessing services.

Applicants may review information below related to providing mental health and supportive services to veterans and family members:

- [Treatment for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Military and Veteran Populations: Initial Assessment](#)
- [Evaluation of the Department of Veteran Affairs Mental Health Services](#)

## 2.5 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

In alignment with the 2016 Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan, the Program encourages use of evidence-based, best, and promising practices in providing veterans and family members with mental health and essential supportive services.

Grantees agree to:

- A. Assess implementation and progress of those practices in the Narrative Proposal (Article V) which should include:
  1. Goals and objectives for the project;
  2. Timeline and milestones for the project; and
  3. Activities and outcomes of the project.
- B. Report on Project results using HHSC-developed reporting processes, forms, and timelines.

HHSC monitors performance of grant contracts awarded under this RFA. Grantees agree to provide all Project services and deliverables at acceptable quality levels consistent with industry standard, custom and practice.

### 2.5.1 Reporting Requirements

To report on Project progress and implementation, each Grantee must submit:

- A. **monthly** Expenditure and Match Reports;
- B. **quarterly** performance, client satisfaction surveys, and fiscal reports;
- C. **budget revision requests** exceeding 25% of total allocation of state funds; and
- D. a **closeout** report no later than 45 days after the Project period.

### 2.5.1.2 Monthly Reports

Each Grantee must submit an Expenditure and Match Report no later than 20 days after the last day of the previous month throughout the Project period.

Each Expenditure and Match Report includes:

- A. expenses the Grantee incurred and paid for during a reporting period, to be reimbursed from state funds,
- B. matching funds expended during that reporting period; and
- C. any information as requested by the System Agency.

### 2.5.1.3 Quarterly Reports

The Grantee must submit quarterly reports no later than 30 days after the end of each State Fiscal Quarter. Grantees report information described in **Performance Measures, Data, and Outcomes** and as proposed in **Form L**. Additionally, **Fiscal** information will be provided on a quarterly basis as required by section 2.6.1 of the Reporting Requirements of this RFA.

Grantees must, report the following:

- A. Unduplicated number of veterans who received mental health services, non-mental health services, and both mental health and non-mental health services,
- B. Unduplicated number of family members who received mental health services, non-mental health services, and both mental health and non-mental health services, and
- C. Effectiveness of grant-supported services based on data related to pre- and post-assessment of clients provided with clinical services to, data collected, and methods of calculation.

### 2.5.2 Client Satisfaction Survey

Grantees are responsible for developing processes to ensure all Clients are provided the HHSC-generated Client Satisfaction Survey. Each Grantee must demonstrate reasonable efforts to attain surveys from all Clients served. The Grantee must collect, maintain, and report completion rates and data received via completed Surveys on a quarterly basis through submitted performance reports.

The Client Satisfaction Survey is intended to measure:

- A. Client Satisfaction with project services
- B. Client perception of military cultural competence
- C. Client perception of awareness and ease of access to services

## 2.6 PROHIBITIONS

Awarded funds and match may not be used to support these services, activities, and costs:

- A. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization,
- B. Lobbying,
- C. Any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official,
- D. Vehicles or equipment for government agencies that are for general agency use and/or do not have a clear nexus to terrorism prevention, interdiction, and disruption (i.e. mobile data terminals, body cameras, in-car video systems, or radar units, etc. for officers assigned to routine patrol),
- E. Weapons, ammunition, tracked armored vehicles, weaponized vehicles or explosives (exceptions may be granted when explosives are used for bomb squad training),
- F. Admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity or sporting event,
- G. Promotional gifts,
- H. Food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments, except for eligible per diem associated with grant-related travel or where pre-approved for working events,
- I. Membership dues for individuals,
- J. Any expense or service readily available for the Project at no cost,
- K. Any use of grant funds to replace (supplant) funds budgeted for the same purpose through non-grant sources,**
- L. Fundraising as defined by CFR 200,
- M. Projects serving the entire state,
- N. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, state, or local law, and
- O. Acquisition or construction of facilities. Renovations may be approved on a case by case basis.

State and federal funds and resources may **not** be used as match for this grant.

## 2.7 STANDARDS

Grantees must comply with the requirements applicable to this funding source cited in the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements* for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200); the *Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS)*, and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

Grantees are required to conduct Project activities in accordance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination. Guidance for adhering to non-discrimination requirements can be found on the Health and Human Services

Commission (HHSC) Civil Rights Office website at:  
<http://www.hhs.state.tx.us/aboutHHS/CivilRights.shtml>.

Upon request, a Grantee must provide the HHSC Civil Rights Office with copies of all the Grantee's civil rights policies and procedures. Grantees must notify HHSC's Civil Rights Office of any civil rights complaints received relating to performance under the contract no more than 10 calendar days after receipt of the complaint. Notice must be directed to:

HHSC Civil Rights Office  
701 W. 51st Street, Mail Code W206  
Austin, TX 78751

Phone Toll Free (888) 388-6332  
Phone: (512) 438-4313  
TTY Toll Free (877) 432-7232  
Fax: (512) 438-5885

A Grantee must ensure that its policies do not have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of persons in the Grantee's programs, benefits or activities on the basis of national origin, and must take reasonable steps to provide services and information, both orally and in writing, in appropriate languages other than English, in order to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are effectively informed and can have meaningful access to programs, benefits, and activities.

Grantees must comply with Executive Order 13279, and its implementing regulations at 45 CFR Part 87 or 7 CFR Part 16, which provide that any organization that participates in programs funded by direct financial assistance from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture or U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services must not, in providing services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief.

## **2.8 DATA USE AGREEMENT**

By entering into a Grant Contract with the HHSC as a result of this RFA, Applicant agrees to be bound by the terms of the Data Use Agreement (DUA) attached as **Exhibit C**. If the Applicant has a previously-approved DUA with HHSC, under a separate contract with HHSC, HHSC may, in its sole discretion determine whether that DUA may be substituted for the DUA in **Exhibit C** at the request of the Applicant. Please indicate in your Application Package if you have a pre-negotiated DUA in your response to **Exhibit D, Exceptions**.

## **2.9 No GUARANTEE OF VOLUME, USAGE OR COMPENSATION**

HHSC makes no guarantee of volume, usage, or total compensation to be paid to any Applicant under any award resulting from this RFA. Any award is subject to appropriations and continuing availability of funds.

HHSC reserves the right to cancel, make partial award, or decline to furnish an award under this RFA at any time at its sole discretion.

**The Grantee must neither assume nor expect additional or continued funding. Any additional or future funds require submission of a successful response through a subsequent RFA.**

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## **ARTICLE III. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

### **3.1 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

| <b>EVENT</b>                                                                                                | <b>DATE/TIME</b>                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| RFA Release Date                                                                                            | February 5, 2019                         |
| Applicant Conference (optional)                                                                             | February 12, 2019                        |
| Deadline for Submitting Questions                                                                           | February 14, 2019 by 2:00pm Central Time |
| Answers to Questions Posted                                                                                 | February 22, 2019                        |
| <b>Deadline for submission of RFA Responses [NOTE: Responses must be RECEIVED by HHSC by the deadline.]</b> | March 19, 2019 by 2:00pm Central Time    |
| Anticipated Contract Start Date                                                                             | September 1, 2019                        |

**Note:** These dates are a tentative schedule of events. The System Agency reserves the right to modify these dates at any time upon notice posted to the [HHS Grants Site](#) and [Texas eGrants](#). Any dates listed after the RFA Response deadline will occur at the discretion of the System Agency and may occur earlier or later than scheduled without notification on the [HHS Grants Site](#) and [Texas eGrants](#).

### **3.2 CHANGES, AMENDMENT OR MODIFICATION TO RFA**

The System Agency reserves the right to change, amend or modify any provision of this RFA, or to withdraw this RFA, at any time prior to award, if it is in the best interest of the System Agency and will post such on the HHS PCS Website and Texas eGrants website. It is the responsibility of Respondent to periodically check the HHS PCS Website and Texas eGrants website to ensure full compliance with the requirements of this RFA.

### **3.3 IRREGULARITIES**

Any irregularities or lack of clarity in this RFA should be brought to the attention of the Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1** as soon as possible so corrective addenda may be furnished to prospective Respondents.

### **3.4 INQUIRIES**

#### **3.4.1 Point of Contact**

All requests, questions or other communication about this RFA shall be made in writing to the HHSC's Procurement Project Manager addressed to the person listed below. All communications between Applicants and other HHSC staff

members concerning the RFA are strictly prohibited unless noted elsewhere in this RFA. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of the Applicant's response to this RFA.**

Name: Michele Rivers, CTCD, CTCM  
Title: Procurement Manager, HHS Procurement and Contracting Services  
Address: 1100 W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin, Texas 78756  
Phone: 512-406-2449  
Email: Michele.Rivers@hhsc.state.tx.us

### **3.4.2 Prohibited Communications**

All communications between Applicants and other HHSC staff members concerning the RFA may not be relied upon and Applicant should send all questions or other communications to the Point of Contact noted in Section 3.4.1. This restriction does not preclude discussions between affected parties for the purposes of conducting business unrelated to this RFA. **Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of the Applicant's response to this RFA.**

### **3.4.3 Questions**

HHSC allows written questions and requests for clarification of this RFA. Questions must be submitted in writing, by U.S. First Class mail or e-mail, to the Point of Contact listed in **Section 3.4.1**. Applicants' names are removed from questions in any responses released. Questions shall be submitted in the following format. Submissions that deviate from this format may not be accepted:

- A. Identifying RFA number
- B. Section Number
- C. Paragraph Number
- D. Page Number
- E. Text of passage being questioned
- F. Question

**Note: Questions or other written requests for clarification must be received by the Point of Contact by the deadline set forth in Section 3.4.1 above. Please provide entity name, address, phone number; fax number, e-mail address, and name of contact person when submitting questions.**

### **3.4.4 Clarification request made by Applicant**

The Applicant must notify the Point of Contact of any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, exclusionary specification, omission or other error in the RFA in the manner and by the deadline for submitting questions.

### 3.4.5 Responses

Responses to questions or other written requests for clarification may be posted on HHS Grants website and Texas eGrants. The System Agency reserves the right to amend answers prior to the deadline of RFA Responses. Amended answers may be posted on HHS Grants website and Texas eGrants. It is Applicant's responsibility to check HHSC Website and Texas eGrants or contact the Point of Contact for updated responses. The System Agency also reserves the right to provide a single consolidated response of all questions at the System Agencies sole discretion.

### 3.4.6 Applicant Conference

The System Agency will conduct an **optional** pre-submittal Applicant conference on February 12, 2019 at 1:30pm Central Time. Applicant may call into the conference by dialing (224) 501-3412 and entering passcode 115-849-133. The respondent conference is **optional**.

To participate in the webinar, Applicants must register at <https://www.gotomeeting.com/meeting/join-meeting>

Passcode: 115849133

## 3.5 RFA RESPONSE COMPOSITION

### 3.5.1 General

All Applications must be:

- A. Clearly legible;
- B. Sequentially page-numbered and include the respondents name at the top of each page;
- C. Organized in the sequence outlined in **Article IX** - Submission Checklist;
- D. In Arial or Times New Roman font, size 12 or larger for normal text, no less than size 10 for tables, graphs, and appendices;
- E. Blank forms provided in the Attachments must be used (electronic reproduction of the forms is acceptable; however, all forms must be identical to the original form(s) provided); do not change the font used on forms provided;
- F. Correctly identified with the RFA number and submittal deadline;
- G. Responsive to all RFA requirements; and
- H. Signed by an authorized official in each place a signature is needed (copies must be signed but need not bear an original signature).



### 3.5.2 Submission in Separate Parts

- A. Administrative Information, including all forms;
- B. Narrative Proposal, including all forms;
- C. Expenditure Proposal; and
- D. Applicable Exhibits and Required Forms.

Paper documents (i.e. the original and all hard copies) must be separated by parts. Electronic submissions must be separated by electronic medium used for submission (i.e. flash drive).

The entire RFA Response – all separated paper documents and electronic copies – must then be submitted in one package to HHSC at the address listed in **Section 3.6.3**. The number of copies and directions for submitting an "Original" and "Copies" are outlined in **Article IX**.

## 3.6 RFA RESPONSE SUBMISSION AND DELIVERY

### 3.6.1 Deadline

RFA Responses must be received at the address in **Section 3.6.3** time-stamped by the System Agency no later than the date and time specified in **Section 3.1**.

The Applicant is solely responsible for ensuring the Application is received prior to the deadline in this RFA. An application received after the deadline may not be evaluated or considered for award.

### 3.6.2 Labeling

RFA Responses shall be placed in a sealed box and clearly labeled as follows:

RFA NO.: RFA # HHS0003297

RFA NAME: Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program

RFA RESPONSE DEADLINE: ~~March 15, 2019~~ **March 19, 2019 by 2:00PM**

**Cetnral Time**

PURCHASER: Michele Rivers, CTCD, CTCM

The System Agency will not be held responsible for any RFA Response that is mishandled prior to receipt by the System Agency. It is Respondent's responsibility to mark appropriately and deliver the RFA Response to the System Agency by the specified date and time.

### **3.6.3 Delivery**

The Applicant must deliver RFA Responses by one of the methods below to the address noted. RFA Responses submitted by any other method (e.g. facsimile, telephone, email) will NOT be considered.

To be delivered by U.S. Postal Service, overnight or express mail, or hand delivery to:

HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS)  
Bid Room  
Attn: Michele Rivers  
1100 W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street, MC 2020  
Service Building (Building S)  
Austin, Texas 78756

**Note: All RFA Responses become the property of HHSC after submission and will not be returned to Respondent.**

### **3.6.4 Alterations, Modifications, and Withdrawals**

Prior to the RFA submission deadline, an Applicant may:

- (1) withdraw its RFA Response by submitting a written request to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**; or
- (2) modify its RFA Response by submitting a written amendment to the Point of Contact identified in **Section 3.4.1**.

The System Agency may request RFA Response Modifications at any time.

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## **ARTICLE IV. RFA RESPONSE EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS**

### **4.1 GENERAL**

A three-step selection process will be used:

- A. Eligibility screening;
- B. Evaluation based upon specific selection criteria;
- C. Final Selection based upon State priorities.

### **4.2 ELIGIBILITY AND RISK SCREENING**

#### **4.2.1 Eligibility Screening**

Applications will be reviewed for minimum qualifications and completeness. All complete applications meeting the minimum qualifications will move to the Evaluation stage. Minimum qualifications for eligibility are:

- A. Application is received by published deadline.
- B. Submitted application is complete and includes all required attachments.
- C. Application is signed by Authorized Representative.
- D. Applicant is eligible per criteria listed in **Section 2.3 Eligible Applicants**.
- E. Applicant does not have an exclusion record in the System for Award Management.

Applications that do not meet all criteria may not be evaluated or considered for award.

#### **4.2.2 Risk Evaluation**

- A. Applicants and Applications are evaluated for risks:
  - 1. in accordance with factors required by S.B. 55,
  - 2. to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse, and
  - 3. to alert the HHSC Executive Commissioner before an award is approved and a contract is executed.
- B. Risks assessed include:
  - 1. Financial stability of the Applicant,
  - 2. Fiscal Controls and Management Systems for the Proposed Project,
  - 3. Applicant's previous experience and performance with grants and contracts,
  - 4. Prior single audit reports, and
  - 5. Contract and litigation history.

## 4.3 EVALUATION

Applications will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the factors required by S.B. 55 and other factors deemed relevant by HHSC.

### 4.3.1 Specific Selection Criteria

Grant applications shall be evaluated based upon:

- A. Project Effectiveness
  - 1. Collaborative, Community, and Unmet Need (24%)
    - a. Form E - Community Collaborative Composition, Structure and Function
    - b. Form F - Community and Populations to be Served
    - c. Form G - Addressing Unmet Needs
  - 2. Form H - Services and Supports to be Provided (24%)
  - 3. Form J and K - Cultural Competence and Veteran, Military Member, and Family Involvement (10%)
  - 4. Proposed Project Execution and Applicant Ability to Execute (20%)
    - a. Form I - Client Engagement and Recruitment
    - b. Form M - Project Timeline and Milestones
    - c. Form N - Applicant and Partner Experience Administering Similar Projects
    - d. Form O - Sustainability
  - 5. Form L Performance Measures, Data and Outcomes (10%)
- B. Project Costs
  - 1. Form P and Q Project Costs, Expenditure and Match Proposal (12%)

## 4.4 FINAL SELECTION

### 4.4.1 Selection Committee

HHSC intends to make multiple awards. After initial eligibility screening, risk evaluation, and scoring of specific criteria listed in **Section 4.3**, a Selection Committee Reviews Applications to determine which Proposed Projects should be awarded funds to most effectively accomplish State priorities.

S.B. 55 permits other factors the HHSC Executive Commissioner considers relevant to be included in selection criteria. The Selection Committee considers the following in recommending awards to the HHS Executive Commissioner:

- A. Evaluation Scores of Applications,
- B. Risk Evaluations of Applications and Applicants,

- C. Geographic distribution of funding and services across the State as represented by recommended Applications, and
- D. The extent to which Applications demonstrate an ability to:
  - 1. Meet intent of the funding,
  - 2. Meet identified community needs,
  - 3. Successfully implement Proposed Projects,
  - 4. Align Project goals with Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan goals,
  - 5. Provide, coordinate, and increase community awareness of Project services in underserved and/or disparately impacted areas of the State,
  - 6. Coordinate existing mental health and supportive services when appropriate to avoid duplication of efforts,
  - 7. Include federal, state, and/or local governments as well as nonprofit and community social service organizations in Community Collaborative,
  - 8. Coordinate and help navigate service systems of federal, state, and/or local governments (including but not limited to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), local government programs, local mental health authorities, Military Veteran Peer Network programs, and CHIP) as well as community social service systems,)
  - 9. Coordinate provision of mental health services and supportive services,
  - 10. Emphasize treatment of posttraumatic stress, depression, anxiety disorders, substance use disorders (SUDs), traumatic brain injury, and/or implement suicide prevention initiatives,
  - 11. Increase availability of behavioral health and support services for family members of veterans, such as:
    - a. Services for the family as a unit and for individual family members,
    - b. Services addressing family relationships and family stress,
    - c. Services addressing family adjustment and issues related to deployments, reintegration, separation, and retirement, and
    - d. Family awareness and education services and supports,
  - 12. Provide Clients more than one service treatment option,
  - 13. Help navigate benefits and service systems such as the VA, local government programs, Medicaid, CHIP, and nonprofit and community social service programs, and
  - 14. Demonstrate higher levels of required match commitment. Applicants able to do so may receive preference for award over Applicants who demonstrate lesser amounts of the required match commitment.

HHSC will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, geographic distribution across the state, state priorities, reasonableness, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.

#### **4.4.2 Final Award Approval**

The HHSC Executive Commissioner makes final award approvals based on eligibility, geographic distribution across the state, state priorities, reasonableness, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.

HHSC may announce Apparent Awardees once the Executive Commissioner gives approval to initiate negotiations and execute contracts.

#### **4.5 NEGOTIATION AND AWARD**

The dollar amount awarded to each Apparent Awardee depends on the:

- A. Merit and scope of the Application,
- B. Recommendation of the Selection Committee, and
- C. Decision of the Executive Commissioner.

Not all Applicants deemed eligible to receive funds are assured of receiving Awards.

The negotiation phase will involve direct contact between the successful Applicant and HHSC representatives via phone and/or email. During negotiations, successful Applicants may expect:

- 1. An in-depth discussion of the submitted proposal and budget; and
- 2. Requests from HHSC for clarification or additional detail regarding submitted Application.

The final funding amount and the provisions of the contract will be determined at the sole discretion of HHSC staff.

HHSC may announce tentative or apparent grant recipients once the Executive Commissioner has given approval to initiate negotiation and execute contracts.

**Any exceptions to the requirements, terms, conditions, or certifications in the RFA or attachments, addendums, or revisions to the RFA or General Provisions, sought by the Applicant must be specifically detailed in writing by the Applicant on Exhibit D: Exception Form in this proposal and submitted to HHSC for consideration. HHSC will accept or reject each proposed exception. HHSC will not consider exceptions submitted separately from the Applicant's proposal or at a later date.**

HHSC will post to the HHSC Website and Texas eGrants website and may publicly announce a list of Applicants whose Applications are selected for final award. This posting does not constitute HHSC's agreement with all the terms of any Applicant's

proposal and does not bind HHSC to enter into a contract with any Applicant whose award is posted.

#### **4.6 QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION BY THE SYSTEM AGENCY**

The System Agency reserves the right to ask questions or request clarification from any Respondent at any time during the application process.

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## **ARTICLE V. NARRATIVE PROPOSAL**

### **5.1 NARRATIVE PROPOSAL**

#### **5.1.1 Form D: Executive Summary**

Using **Form D**, the Applicant:

- A. provides a high-level overview of the Community Collaborative approach to meeting RFA requirements, and
- B. demonstrates understanding and Project alignment with Grant Program goals and objectives.

#### **5.1.2 Form E: Community Collaborative Composition, Structure and Function**

Using **Form E**, the Applicant:

- A. Describes the composition and structure of the Community Collaborative, including:
  1. Each Community Collaborative member organization, organization type, and each organization's representatives,
  2. Whether the partnership is formally established or informally organized, and length of the partnership, and
  3. Roles and responsibilities of Applicant and Partners under the Project.
- B. Describes how the Applicant and Partners will implement and administer the Proposed Project, including:
  1. How often the Applicant and Partners will convene to review and discuss the Project; and
  2. A description of communication processes and how decisions will be made by the Community Collaborative.
- C. Demonstrates evidence of significant coordination and collaboration between Community Collaborative members by describing:
  1. How long the Community Collaborative has been in existence,
  2. Projects the Community Collaborative has implemented, and
  3. Results of those projects.

#### **5.1.3 Form F: Community and Populations to be Served**

**Statewide Proposed Projects will not be considered for TV+FA awards.**

Using **Form F**, the Applicant:

- A. Describes the community or service area to be served including:
  1. General geographic and demographic information, and



2. Relevant information regarding the service area that directly impacts ability of veterans and family members to access mental health services.
- B. Prioritizes which Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan gaps are most impacting veterans and their families in the community.
  - C. Discusses data and input used to determine gaps most impacting the community.
  - D. Describes target populations to be served by the Proposed Project.
    1. Describe how Applicant and Partner Organizations will define:
      - "veteran" and (e.g. retired or separated from the U.S. Armed Forces, honorably discharged, National Guardsmen and women, Reservists, active duty personnel, etc.) and
      - "family member" (e.g., spouse, child, parent, caregiver, etc.).
    2. If specific demographic group(s) (e.g., women veterans, OIF/OEF veterans, low-income veterans and families) will be served, the Applicant must define each group.
  - E. Describes how Applicant and Partner organizations will verify client eligibility. All entities providing Project services **must**:
    1. Ensure clients are eligible to receive services before the Grantee requests reimbursement for those services. In specific extenuating circumstances, it may be unreasonable to obtain eligibility documentation.  
The Grantee must:
      - a. notify HHS of such circumstances and
      - b. document due diligence to determine veteran, dependent, and/or spousal status.
    2. Maintain eligibility documentation in client records.
      - a. Describes how Applicant and Partners will verify eligibility of clients to receive services as defined in responses to **B.1 and B.2**.
      - b. Describes how eligibility document(s) will be retained.

#### **5.1.4 Form G: Addressing Unmet Needs**

Using **Form G**, the Applicant:

- A. Describes how the Community Collaborative will, under the Proposed Project:
  1. Improve existing mental health services and/or supportive services essential to providing mental health services in the community;
  2. Increase availability of mental health services and/or supportive services;
  3. Increase and improve access to local mental health services and/or supportive services.

- B. Describes existing disparities in access to and outcomes of mental health care for veterans and family members in the proposed service area.

### **5.1.5 Form H: Services and Supports to be Provided**

Mental health and support services should emphasize treatment of posttraumatic stress, anxiety disorders, depression, substance use disorders (SUDs), traumatic brain injury, and trauma around military involvement including moral injury. They may also address:

- A. needs related to treating and addressing comorbid physical health conditions, and
- B. consequences of unmet needs such as homelessness, incarceration, and unemployment.

A Proposed Project may include supportive services that seek to address barriers preventing veterans and their families from accessing and/or participating in mental health programs, services, and treatment.

The Applicant should show the primary focus of the Proposed Project is to provide mental health services, treatment, and supportive services.

Using **Form H**, the Applicant:

- A. Details all client services and supports to be provided under the Project, and:
  - 1. How services and supports will be provided,
  - 2. How clients will access services and supports, and
  - 3. If services will be provided by the Applicant or a Partner (and which Partner will provide each service).
- B. Demonstrates use of evidence-based, best, and/or promising practices as an integral part of the Proposed Project.
  - 1. Describes evidence-based, best, and/or promising practices to be used,
  - 2. Cites respected sources in choosing practices to be implemented,
  - 3. If the practice is not evidence-based, cites data and evidence supporting efficacy of the practice and the rationale for offering the practice instead of an evidence-based practice, and
  - 4. Describes how non-clinical supportive services will be implemented using best and/or innovative practices supported by data.
- C. Describes how/in what ways the Applicant and/or Partners could participate in and contribute to a statewide learning community that embraces learning in action as a social process.

### **5.1.6 Form I: Client Engagement and Recruitment**

In **Form I**, the Applicant describes the Community Collaborative plan and ability to engage veterans and family members through outreach, recruitment and/or referral sources.

### **5.1.7 Form J: Cultural Competence and Military-Informed Services**

In **Form J**, the Applicant:

- A. Demonstrates project services and supports are:
  - 1. Provided with military cultural competence,
  - 2. Person and family-centered,
  - 3. Recovery-oriented,
  - 4. Trauma-informed, and
  - 5. Culturally sensitive reflecting clients' cultural, racial, and ethnic needs.
- B. Describes involvement of members of appropriate cultural groups at policy, planning, and service delivery levels of the Proposed Project.
- C. Describe adaptation of practices (including evidence-based, best, and promising practices) to respond to represented cultures' strengths and needs.

### **5.1.8 Form K: Community Veteran, Military Member and Family Involvement**

Using **Form K**, the Applicant describes how it will solicit and incorporate input from veterans, military members, and family members in project planning, implementation and ongoing decision making.

### **5.1.9 Form L: Performance Measures, Data and Outcomes**

Using **Form L**, the Applicant:

- A. Identifies estimated unduplicated numbers of veterans and family members to be served by the Project.
- B. Demonstrates how estimated unduplicated numbers of clients to be served were determined.
- C. Estimates the total number of services to be provided under the Project including the total number of sessions within each service, in example:

1. total number of EMDR sessions to be provided to clients,
2. the total number of individual equine therapy sessions provided to clients, total number of transportation assistance services provided

These estimated numbers will serve as benchmarks to monitor Project progress.

- D. Describes the anticipated average length of time a Client will be engaged in receiving services.
- E. HHSC is committed to capturing Program impact and effectiveness and requires grantees to use, to the extent possible, a uniform and common measure.

Primary common measurement tools identified for this program are the:

1. Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment (ANSA) for adults ages 18 years and older, and
  2. Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS) for children or youth ages 3 to 17 years old.
- F. For grant program purposes, these are used to demonstrate improvement rather than to determine levels of care with regard to recovery plans.

Information about CANS and ANSA can be found using these links:

1. An overview of ANSA: <http://praedfoundation.org/tools/the-adult-needs-and-strengths-assessment-ansa/>
2. An overview of CANS: <https://praedfoundation.org/tools/the-child-and-adolescent-needs-and-strengths-cans/>
3. Materials (tools and instructions for using them): <https://praedfoundation.org/tools/the-child-and-adolescent-needs-and-strengths-cans/texas/>
4. Information about training and certification: <https://praedfoundation.org/training-and-certification/>

The Applicant must indicate whether the Community Collaborative will:

- a. Use CANS and ANSA, and/or
  - b. Request use of substitute measurement tool(s).
- G. HHSC recognizes that for some Applicants and Partners, particular instruments may lend themselves to better capturing impact of specific types of services.

1. To request use of a measurement tool in addition to or in place of the ANSA and CANS, the Applicant must provide information about each proposed tool as indicated below.
  - a. Select from these tools:
    - i. Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI)
    - ii. Beck Depression Inventory - Version 2 (BDI-II)
    - iii. Cut down, annoyed, guilty, eye-opener, adapted to include drugs (CAGE-AID)
    - iv. Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale - Version 5 (CAPS-V)
    - v. Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center Assessments (DVBIC) - Brief Traumatic Brain Injury Screen (BTBIS)
    - vi. Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item Scale (GAD-7)
    - vii. PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5)
    - viii. Patient Health Questionnaire 9-item Screen (PHQ-9)
    - ix. Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC)
    - x. Quality of Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction Questionnaire - Short Form (Q-LES-Q-SF)
  - b. Explain why each tool(s) is a better fit for measuring effectiveness of Proposed Project services than the ANSA and CANS.
2. If the Applicant proposes use of a measurement tool that is not part of the list, the Applicant must:
  - a. Briefly describe each tool, including its reliability and validity. Include references describing what magnitude of change(s) in each tool corresponds to clinically meaningful improvements.
  - b. Submit a copy of tool(s) with the Application.
  - c. Explain how each tool is equivalent to the CANS and ANSA in measuring service effectiveness.
  - d. Explain why tool(s) are a better fit for measuring service effectiveness than the ANSA, CANS, or pre-approved substitute measures.

All requests to use substitute measures in lieu of the CANS and ANSA are subject to HHSC approval. The Applicant must be prepared to respond to inquiries regarding proposed substitute/additional tools and provide assistance in developing reporting templates.

- H. Demonstrates openness to identifying learning needs and embracing lessons learned over time.

## 5.2.0 Form M: Project Timeline and Milestones

Using **Form M**, the Applicant provides a timeline including milestones and anticipated completion dates associated with planning, implementing and closing the Project.

## 5.2.1 Form N: Applicant and Partner Experience Administering Similar Projects

Using **Form N**, the Applicant:

- A. Describes Applicant and Partner backgrounds as they relate to:
  - 1. Successfully implementing projects similar in scope and complexity to the Proposed Project,
  - 2. Successfully implementing projects serving veterans and family members, and
  - 3. Successfully convening and leading a Community Collaborative in implementing a project.
- B. Describes Applicant and Partner experience managing grants and contracts related to:
  - 1. State-funded and/or federally-funded grants,
  - 2. Cost-reimbursement funded grant projects, and
  - 3. Managing and reporting match commitments
- C. Describes Applicant experience serving in a lead capacity in the community including creating project infrastructure and processes to identify, support, and provide fiscal and programmatic oversight to funded Partners.
- D. Describes Applicant and Partner experience collecting and reporting performance and outcome data.
- E. Describes Applicant experience managing and reporting expended funds and committed match in collaboration with Partners.
- F. Identify key Proposed Project personnel using the table provided. Submit **brief bio** and **current job descriptions** to demonstrate experience germane to Proposed Project roles.

### 5.2.2 Form O: Sustainability

The Program seeks to empower local communities to identify and address mental health needs of veterans and family members. Awards are intended to serve as catalysts for communities to develop and support:

- A. **sustainable partnerships**
- B. **collaborative relationships**
- C. **coordinated service delivery systems**
- D. **continue to operate after the life of a grant-funded project**

Using **Form O**, the Applicant describes specific efforts on behalf of the Applicant and Community Collaborative to establish community buy-in and create community ownership that will help sustain its work after the Project Period has ended.

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## **ARTICLE VI. REQUIRED APPLICANT INFORMATION**

### **6.1 ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY INFORMATION**

Applicant must provide satisfactory evidence of its ability to manage and coordinate the types of activities described in this RFA. As a part of the RFA Response requested in **Article III**, Applicant must provide the following information using **Form A – Face Page** and **Form B** included in the Administrative Information Forms document attached to this RFA.

### **6.2 LITIGATION AND CONTRACT HISTORY**

Applicant must include in its RFA Response a complete disclosure of any alleged or significant contractual failures using **Form B**.

In addition, Applicant must disclose any civil or criminal litigation or investigation pending over the last five (5) years that involves Applicant or in which Applicant has been judged guilty or liable. Failure to comply with the terms of this provision may disqualify Applicant.

RFA Response may be rejected based upon Applicant's prior history with the State of Texas or with any other party that demonstrates, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, or significant failure(s) to meet contractual obligations.

### **6.3 CONFLICTS**

Applicant must certify, using **Form B**, that it does not have any personal or business interests that present a conflict of interest with respect to the RFA and any resulting contract. Additionally, if applicable, the Applicant must disclose all potential conflicts of interest. The Applicant must describe the measures it will take to ensure that there will be no actual conflict of interest and that its fairness, independence and objectivity will be maintained. The System Agency will determine to what extent, if any, a potential conflict of interest can be mitigated and managed during the term of the contract. Failure to identify actual and potential conflicts of interest may result in disqualification of a RFA Response or termination of a contract.

Please include any activities of affiliated or parent organizations and individuals who may be assigned to this Contract, if any.

Additionally, pursuant to Section 2252.908 of the Texas Government Code, a successful respondent awarded a contract greater than \$1 million dollars, or that requires an action or vote of the governing body, must submit a disclosure of interested parties to the state agency at the time the business entity submits the



signed contract. Rules and filing instructions may be found on the Texas Ethics Commissions public website and additional instructions will be given by HHSC to successful respondents.

#### **6.4 GRANT APPLICATION DISCLOSURE**

In an effort to maximize state resources and reduce duplication of effort, HHSC, at its discretion, may require the Applicant to disclose information regarding the application for or award of state, federal, and/or local grant funding by the Applicant or Community Collaborative member organization within the past two years to provide mental health services and supports to Texas veterans and family members.

#### **6.5 AFFIRMATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS**

Applicant must complete and return all the following listed forms and exhibits. Exhibits are listed following **Article IX**.

- A. Exhibit A, Affirmations and Acceptance
- B. Exhibit C, Data Use Agreement
- C. Exhibit D, Exceptions and Assumptions Form
- D. Exhibit F, Federal Assurance-Non Construction
- E. Exhibit G, Federal Lobbying Certification
- F. Exhibit R, TVFA Internal Control Structure Questionnaire

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## **ARTICLE VII. EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL**

### **7.1 MATCH FORM; EXPENDITURE AND MATCH PROPOSAL AND INTERNAL CONTROLS**

**Forms P and Q** include templates for submitting Project budget expenditure and match information; which must support and align with the Scope of Grant Award described in **Article II** and in the Narrative Proposal (**Forms D - O.**) **Form R** includes a checklist for identifying the financial position of the organization.

#### **7.1.1 Form P: Match**

Using **Form P**, the Applicant notes each organization providing the match and if each match is **committed**, **anticipated**, or **to be raised** per UGMS requirements noted.

**State or federal funds must not be used as match. This includes contracts, grants, goods, services and any other funding allocated by, awarded to, or passed-through from state or federal governmental entities.**

- A. Applicants are not required to have 100 percent of matching funds committed at the time of application submissions. However:
  - 1. The Grantee must match state awarded funds on a dollar for dollar basis.
  - 2. After the disbursement of initial payment, if requested;
    - No state funds are released before the Grantee demonstrates an equivalent amount of committed, expended match to HHSC.
  - 3. The Grantee must report matching funds monthly as they are used.
  - 4. All match must be used within the contract period.
- B. Matching funds may be:
  - 1. Cash provided through unrestricted funding provided specifically for the Proposed Project by the Applicant, Partners, and/or local philanthropic, private, city, or county funds,
  - 2. In-kind contributions of goods, services and/or resources committed specifically for the Proposed Project by the Applicant and/or Partners,
  - 3. Volunteer time to accomplish activities specifically for the Proposed Project.
- C. For grant program purposes, matching funds must be characterized as:
  - 1. **“Committed”** - funds or resources have been received or documentation is provided by the donor committing resources for the purpose of meeting this grant’s match requirement.
  - 2. **“Anticipated”** - funds or resources have been identified but are not yet received or there is no documentation to support the identified match.
  - 3. **“To be Raised”** - matching funds or resources have not yet been identified and/or a commitment for funds or resources has not yet been secured.
- D. The Applicant must identify committed and anticipated matching funds.

1. Matching funds must support Project activities.
  2. Matching funds to be used outside of the Project period may not be counted.
- E. To document matching funds as committed, the Applicant must provide documentation listed and determination of the value of donated materials, professional services, and volunteer time calculated in accordance with UGMS Section .24, Subpart C.
1. For cash contributions:
    - a. A letter from the donor on the donor's letterhead to the Applicant demonstrating donor intent to meet the Applicant's match,
    - b. A written resolution or consent from the Applicant's governing board or senior official that a donation obtained by the Applicant will meet the Applicant's match, **or**
    - c. A donor's notation on a check reflecting the purpose of the donation, **and**
    - d. Copies of cancelled donor checks or bank statement showing the transfer of funds by wire or receipt of credit card payments.
  2. For donated or discounted materials or services: a commitment of resources and their retail value described on the donor's letterhead.
  3. For in-kind resources including donated professional services: a letter from the donor organization on the donor's letterhead committing specific resources and stating the retail value of the specific resources.
  4. For volunteer labor: a signed letter of commitment from the Applicant's governing board or senior official outlining:
    - a. the number of volunteers,
    - b. the number of volunteer hours,
    - c. volunteer activity description, and
    - d. the rate at which volunteer labor will be valued.

Volunteer labor to be provided to an Applicant by individuals will be valued at rates consistent with those ordinarily paid for similar work in the Applicant's organization. If the Applicant does not have employees performing similar work, the rates will be consistent with those ordinarily paid by other employers for similar work in the same labor market.

5. Grantees must report all cash and in-kind match used on a monthly basis throughout the contract period.

### **7.1.2 Form Q: Expenditure and Match Proposal**

Using **Form Q**, the Applicant:

- A. Demonstrates Project costs are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and developed in accordance with applicable state and federal grant requirements.
- B. Identifies costs requested from HHSC (state-requested grant dollars) and costs to be matched. Costs must align with Project activities as described throughout the Response.
- C. Details funds and resources to match state-requested grant dollars and identifies each as committed, anticipated, or to be raised.
  - 1. The Applicant must:
    - a. Identify Project activity costs to be requested from HHSC (state funds) and Project activity costs to be matched, and
    - b. Break out costs to a degree sufficient to clearly show costs are reasonable, allowable, allocable, necessary for successful Project performance, and developed in accordance with applicable state and federal grant requirements.
  - 2. All costs must be:
    - a. Entered in **Form Q** budget tables;
    - b. Supported by narrative descriptions beneath each table outlining:
      - i. How each cost supports Project activities,
      - ii. How each cost meets Project goals and objectives, and
      - iii. Accompanied by calculations clearly showing how each cost was derived.

Costs are reviewed for compliance with UGMS and federal grant guidance found in 2 CFR Part 200, as modified by UGMS, with effect given to whichever provision imposes the more stringent requirement in the event of a conflict.

HHSC reserves the right to accept or reject any assumptions listed on the Exceptions Form. All assumptions not expressly identified and incorporated into the contract resulting from this RFA are deemed rejected by HHSC.

### **7.1.3 Form R: Internal Control Structure Questionnaire**

Using **Form R**, the Applicant:

- A. Indicates the financial position of the organization;
- B. Identifies the organization general accounting controls;
- C. Identifies if the organization has written personnel policies, and what information is included in the organization's personnel policies;

- D. Identifies if the organization has written travel policy. Provide the State Agency a copy of a blank travel voucher, and a blank travel log with Attachment R;
- E. Identifies if subcontractors are used by the organization;
- F. Identifies if the organization subcontracts with a related party to provide part or all of the program services; and
- G. Identifies if there any key employees (e.g., executive director, president, chief executive officer, or administrator) who exert a degree of control with whom your organization is “doing business”.

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## **ARTICLE VIII. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **8.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS**

#### **8.1.1 Costs Incurred**

Applicant understands that issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by any System Agency to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred by an Applicant in the preparation of a response to this RFA. The System Agency is not liable for any costs incurred by an Applicant prior to issuance of or entering into a formal agreement, contract, or purchase order. Costs of developing RFA Responses, preparing for or participating in oral presentations and site visits, or any other similar expenses incurred by an Applicant are entirely the responsibility of the Applicant, and will not be reimbursed in any manner by the State of Texas.

#### **8.1.2 Contract Responsibility**

The System agency will look solely to Applicant for the performance of all contractual obligations that may result from an award based on this RFA. Applicant shall not be relieved of its obligations for any nonperformance by its Partners.

#### **8.1.3 Public Information Act**

RFA Responses are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (PIA), Texas Government Code Chapter 552, and may be disclosed to the public upon request. Subject to the PIA, certain information may be protected from public release. Applicant who wish to protect portions of the RFA Response from public disclosure should familiarize themselves with this law. Information pertaining to the RFA will be withheld or released only in accordance with the PIA.

#### **8.1.4 News Releases**

Prior to final award an Applicant may not issue a press release or provide any information for public consumption regarding its participation in the procurement. Requests should be directed to the HHSC Point of Contact Identified in **Article III**.

#### **8.1.5 Additional Information**

By submitting a proposal, the Applicant grants HHSC the right to obtain information from any lawful source regarding the Applicant's and its directors', officers', and employees':

- (1) past business history, practices, and conduct;
- (2) ability to supply the goods and services; and
- (3) ability to comply with contract requirements.

By submitting a proposal, a respondent generally releases from liability and waives all claims against any party providing HHSC information about the respondent. HHSC may take such information into consideration in evaluating proposals.

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## **ARTICLE IX. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST**

This checklist is provided for Applicant's convenience only and identifies documents that must be submitted with this RFA to be considered responsive. Any RFA Response received without these requisite documents may be deemed nonresponsive and may not be considered for contract award.

**Forms discussed in this RFA, as well as the Checklist, are attached at the end of this RFA.**

### **Original RFA Response Package**

The RFA Package must include the "Original" RFA Response in **hard-copy** consisting of the three parts described in detail below, each must be under separate cover but packaged together and clearly labeled "Original" on each.

- 1. Submission Checklist**
- 2. Exhibits and Applicable Forms**
  - a. Exhibit A, Affirmations and Acceptance**
  - b. Exhibit C Data Use Agreement, v8.3, if applicable**
  - c. Exhibit D, Exceptions and Assumptions Form, if applicable**
  - d. Exhibit F, Federal Assurance-Non Construction**
  - e. Exhibit G, Federal Lobbying Certification**
  - f. Administrative Information (Forms A-B)**
  - g. Narrative Proposal (Forms D-O)**
  - h. Expenditure and Match Proposal (Forms P-Q)**
  - i. Internal Controls Checklist (Form R)**

### **3. Copies of RFA Response Package**







Applicant will provide the following number of **electronic** copies (all clearly labeled as "copy") in addition to the hard-copy "Original" RFA Response. Electronic copies must be submitted on a USB Drive and separated by folders.








- **1** Electronic copy of **Submission Checklist**
- **1** Electronic copy of **Administrative Information** (Forms A-B)
- **1** Electronic copy of **Narrative Proposal** (Forms D-O)
- **1** Electronic copy of **Expenditure and Match Proposal** (Forms P-Q)
- **1** Electronic copy of **Internal Controls Checklist** (Form R)



## **EXHIBITS AND APPLICABLE FORMS**

### List of Exhibits and Forms to this RFA

| <b>Exhibit Letter</b> | <b>Title of Exhibit</b>                                                                          | <b>Document Location</b>                                                                                                                                 | <b>Required Return with Application?</b>                                                       |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exhibit A             | Affirmations and Solicitation Acceptance, Version 1.3                                            | Document embedded here:<br><br>Exhibit A Affirmations and So           | <b>Yes</b> , with Applicant signature                                                          |
| Exhibit B             | HHS Uniform Terms and Conditions - Grant, Version 2.16                                           | Document embedded here:<br><br>Grantee UTC VERSION 2 16.pdf            | <b>No</b> ; Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements                 |
| Exhibit C             | HHS Data Use Agreement, Version 8.3 and Security and Privacy Intial Inquiry (SPI), if applicable | Document embedded here:<br><br>DUA - NEW v8-4 MARCH 2018.pdf          | <b>Yes</b> ; Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements, if applicable |
| Exhibit D             | Exceptions and Assumptions Form                                                                  | Document embedded here:<br><br>Exhibit D Exceptions Form.doc         | <b>Yes</b> , if applicable                                                                     |
| Exhibit E             | HHSC Special Conditions - Grantee                                                                | Document embedded here:<br><br>HHSC Special Conditions Version 1.    | <b>No</b> ; Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements                 |
| Exhibit F             | Federal Assurance-Non Construction                                                               | Document embedded here:<br><br>Federal Assurances - Non Construction | <b>Yes</b> , with Applicant signature                                                          |

|                            |                                          |                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exhibit G                  | Federal Lobbying Certification           | Document embedded here:<br><br>Federal Lobbying Certification - ed80-        | <b>Yes</b> , with Applicant signature                                           |
| Exhibit H                  | Evaluation Tool                          | Document embedded here:<br><br>Evaluation Tool.pdf                           | <b>No</b>                                                                       |
| Application Form Checklist | Submission Checklist                     | Document embedded here:<br><br>Submission Checklist.docx                     | <b>Yes</b> , Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements |
| Application Forms A-B      | Administrative Information               | Document embedded here:<br><br>Administrative Information_IV.docx            | <b>Yes</b> Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements   |
| Application Forms D-O      | Narrative Proposal Forms                 | Document embedded here:<br><br>Narrative Proposal Forms.docx               | <b>Yes</b> Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements   |
| Application Forms P and Q  | Expenditure and Match Proposal Template  | Document embedded here:<br><br>Expenditure and Match Proposal Tem          | <b>Yes</b> Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements   |
| Application Form R         | Internal Control Structure Questionnaire | Document embedded here:<br><br>TVFA Internal Control Structure Questionnai | <b>Yes</b> Applicant must read and ensure ability to comply with requirements   |